THE BEN GREET SHAKESPEARE

FOR YOUNG READERS
AND
AMATEUR PLAYERS

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS

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DROMIO OF EPHESUS

"Me thinks you are my glass, and not my brother"

The Ben Greet Shakespeare

For Young Readers and Amateur Players

The Comedy of Errors

Garden City New York
Doubleday, Page & Company

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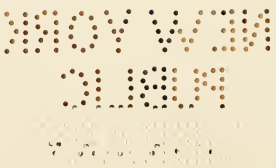

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A FEW GENERAL RULES OR CUSTOMS OF ACTING

The letters *R* and *L* indicate the position of players on the stage facing the audience. *R* 1, *L* 1 are the entrances nearest the front. *Go up* means from the audience; *go down* is toward the audience. *R C* is the right side of the centre, — and so forth.

When the characters enter, the person speaking generally comes second.

Do not huddle together; do not stand in lines; and do not get in such angles that you cannot be seen by the sides of an audience.

Stand still — keep the leg nearest the audience back, gesticulate seldom and with the hand farthest from the audience. Do not point to your chest or heart when you say *I*, *my* and *mine*, nor to your neighbor when saying *thou*, *thy*, and *thine*, unless absolutely necessary.

Try to reverse the usual acting of the present day and eliminate the personal pronoun

as far as possible (Shakespeare does it all the time). Occasionally the pointing gesture is necessary — but seldom.

Do not try to say more than six words, or at most eight, in one breath. Careful punctuation and accent are harmonious and necessary. Whatever you do, sound the last two or three words of the line or sentence: dropping the voice is the worst fault of our best actors. Do not speak to your audience or at your audience, but with your fellow actors, remembering, of course, that you have invisible listeners, and that the last man in the house wants to hear and see.

Do not imitate our star actors. Try to be natural, spontaneous, and original. At the same time, keep control of yourself and your emotions. To appear to be, and not really to be the character you are acting, is, perhaps, the perfection of the art.

Don't fidget your hands and feet — forget them, and let them be where the good Lord has placed them.

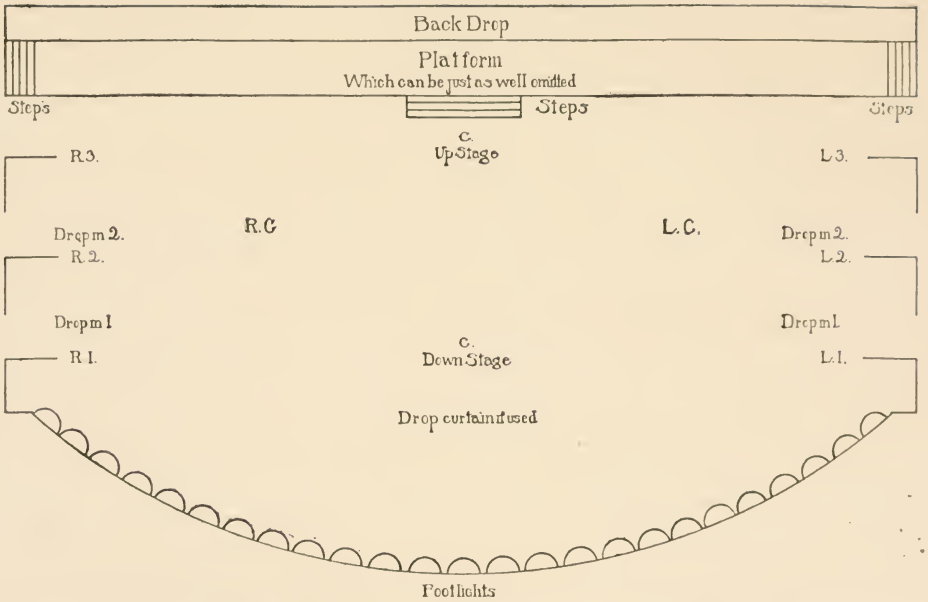
These few hints will be useful for all plays. I shall give more intimate notes as we go along.

The diagrams show the positions, entrances, etc.

The plays are cut to the length of an ordinary performance. Lines can be restored or further cut, if desirable, always remembering that a play given on what we will always call the Shakespeare stage should be given more rapidly, with no pauses between scenes or between entrances and exits, and with possibly only one intermission (of perhaps five minutes), as near as possible halfway through; and most of the plays can be acted in their entirety in about three hours, some of them in much less time — one or two of them take much more. If we cannot quite reduce ours to the happy medium of two hours, we must get as near it as possible. It is better to send your friends away wanting more, than to have them go home yawning! This is a word to the wise.

As to stage setting, it can be done in lots of ways: with scenery, or with screens, or curtains, or in the open air. Strange as it may appear, the plays of Shakespeare are equally effective whichever way we may choose to give them. I imagine most good plays will bear that test.

Remember that Shakespeare is the most perfect English. Do not imitate some of those professors, especially teachers of what is called Elocution and Expression, if by any chance they happen to pronounce it in up-to-date American or cockney British, or tell you it was conceived in any other brogue, accent, or pronunciation than the purest of pure English. There are a few mistakes in his plays, and some printer's errors, about which volumes have been written. Study the humanity, the heart, the English of Shakespeare, as of the Bible — those two wonderful Books of the same generation — the one splendidly revised and perfected by many scholars, the other produced in a state of nature and yet almost perfect — study them, my young friends, inwardly digest your Bible and outwardly demonstrate your Shakespeare: you will then start in life pretty well equipped.



The space between the footlights and drop or folding curtain can be reduced to any dimension.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SOLINUS, *duke of Ephesus*
ÆGEON, *a merchant of Syracuse.*

ANTIPHOLUS *of Ephesus*, } *twin brothers and sons to*
ANTIPHOLUS *of Syracuse*, } *Ægeon and Æmilia.*

DROMIO *of Ephesus*, } *twin brothers, and attendants,*
DROMIO *of Syracuse*, } *on the two Antipholuses.*

BALTHAZAR, *a merchant.*
ANGELO, *a goldsmith.*
First Merchant, *friend to Antipholus of Syracuse.*
Second Merchant, *to whom Angelo is a debtor.*
PINCH, *a magician.*
ÆMILIA, *wife to Ægeon, an Abbess at Ephesus.*
ADRIANA, *wife to Antipholus of Ephesus.*
LUCIANA, *her sister.*
LUCE, *servant to Adriana.*
PHRYNE.

Gaoler, Officers, and other Attendants.

This charming little comedy written after the style of a Latin play (as "The Winter's Tale" is partly founded on the Greek), is one of the first plays written by Shakespeare. The scene needs no change and the action is continuous, being contained in the time occupied with the events of the play, called by some "the unities of time, and place." It is simplicity itself, and yet so well constructed, that the events seem the climax of an eventful day in the life of a family.

This play can be acted in the same scene all through if desired. It can be a public place with an indication of Greek porticos, right, centre, and left. The house on the R is the Phœnix and could have a small design over the door. The centre would be the Abbey, and could have a small Greek design over it. On the left is the sign of the Porcupine; or, a general exit leading into the city. At the opening the Duke would be discovered, or would be proceeding through the city with Ægeon, who is bound either in cords or in chains,

with a soldier preceding and following, and several attendants of the Duke. An officer would affix to one of the buildings, that on the L for choice, a parchment stating the cause of the merchant's detention. It would not be removed till almost the end of the play.

A distant bell or gong might be sounded at long intervals during the scene to give an atmosphere of solemnity.

The Duke's speech is long and wants precision, but variety of tone; it is the prologue and must be retained. The long descriptive narratives of Ægeon are so picturesque and virile that, with the abridgment, they are most interesting and should be given to the best actor of your company.

ACT I

Scene I. *A Public Place in Ephesus.*

Enter Duke, Ægeon, Gaoler, Officers and *other* Attendants.

Æge. (*C*). Proceed, Solinus, to procure my fall,
And by the doom of death end woes and all.
Duke. (*R C*). Merchant of Syracusa, plead no more;
I am not partial to infringe our laws:
The enmity and discord which of late
Sprung from the rancorous outrage of your duke
To merchants, our well-dealing countrymen,
Who, wanting guilders to redeem their lives,
Have seal'd his rigorous statutes with their bloods,
Excludes all pity from our threatening looks.
For, since the mortal and intestine jars
'Twixt thy seditious countrymen and us,

It hath in solemn synods been decreed,
Both by the Syracusians and ourselves,
To admit no traffic to our adverse towns:
Nay, more,
If any born at Ephesus be seen
At any Syracusian marts and fairs;
Again: if any Syracusian born
Come to the bay of Ephesus, he dies,
His goods confiscate to the duke's dispose;
Unless a thousand marks be levied,
To quit the penalty and to ransom him.
Thy substance, valued at the highest rate,
Cannot amount unto a hundred marks;
Therefore by law thou art condemn'd to die.

Æge. Yet this my comfort: when your words are done, (*Sits on seat R C.*)
My woes end likewise with the evening sun.

Duke. Well, Syracusian, say, in brief, the cause (*Sits on seat R C.*)
Why thou departed'st from thy native home,
And for what cause thou camest to Ephesus.

Æge. A heavier task could not have been imposed
Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable:

In Syracusa was I born: and wed
Unto a woman, happy but for me.
With her I lived in joy; our wealth increased
By prosperous voyages I often made
To Epidamnum;
There had she not been long but she became
A joyful mother of two goodly sons;
And, which was strange, the one so like the other
As could not be distinguish'd but by names.
That very hour, and in the selfsame inn,
A meaner woman was delivered
Of such a burthen, male twins, both alike:
Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,
I bought, and brought up to attend my sons.
A league from Epidamnum had we sail'd,
Before the always-wind-obeying deep
Gave any tragic instance of our harm:
The sailors sought for safety by our boat,
And left the ship, then sinking-ripe, to us:
My wife, more careful for the latter-born,
Had fasten'd him unto a small spare mast,
Such as seafaring men provide for storms;
To him one of the other twins was bound,
Whilst I had been like heedful of the other:
The children thus disposed, my wife and I,

[1]*Toward is pronounced as a monosyllable.*

[2]*Ægeon here breaks down and there is a slight pause.*

[3]*Ægeon summons all his strength to complete the story. He should not be tottery, but a fine, virile old hero, handsome and sympathetic.*

Fasten'd ourselves at either end the mast;
And floating straight, obedient to the stream,
Was carrièd toward[1] Corinth, as we thought.
At length the sun
Dispersed those vapours that offended us;
And we discovered two ships from far making
amain to us,
Of Corinth that, of Epidaurus this:
But ere they came — O, let me say no more!
Gather the sequel by that went before.[2]

Duke. Nay, forward, old man; do not break
off so;
For we may pity, though not pardon thee.

Æge.[3] O, had the gods done so, I had not now
Worthily term'd them merciless to us!
For, ere the ships could meet by twice five
leagues,
We were encounter d by a mighty rock;
Which being violently borne upon,
Our helpful ship was splitted in the midst;
And in our sight they three were taken up
By fishermen of Corinth, as we thought.
Thus have you heard me sever'd from my bliss;
That by misfortunes was my life prolong'd,
To tell sad stories of my own mishaps.

Duke. And, for the sake of them thou sorrowest for,
Do me the favour to dilate at full
What hath befall'n of them and thee till now.

Æge. My youngest boy, and yet my eldest care,
At eighteen years became inquisitive
After his brother: and importuned me
That his attendant — so his case was like,
Reft of his brother, but retain'd his name —
Might bear him company in the quest of him:
Five summers have I spent in farthest Greece,
Roaming clean through the bounds of Asia,
And, coasting homeward, came to Ephesus;
Hopeless to find, yet loath to leave unsought
Or that, or any place that harbours men.
But here must end the story of my life;
And happy were I in my timely death,
Could all my travels warrant me they live.

Duke. Hapless Ægeon, whom the Fates have mark'd (*Rises*)
To bear the extremity of dire mishap!
Now, trust me, were it not against our laws,
Against my crown, my oath, my dignity,
My soul should sue as advocate for thee.

[1]*Solinus goes off R with attendants; the gaoler and two soldiers move off with Ægeon R; the bell tolls again till they are well off; then the action of the play proceeds spiritedly.*

[2]*He goes up and looks at the parchment nailed to the L C building, pointing to it.*

[3]*Antipholus takes a bag from the merchant and gives it to Dromio; crosses to C. Merchant crosses to R. Dromio is L C.*

Therefore, merchant, I'll limit thee this day
To seek thy help by beneficial help:
Try all the friends thou hast in Ephesus;
Beg thou, or borrow, to make up the sum,
And live; if no, then thou art doom'd to die.
Gaoler, take him to thy custody.[1]

Æge. Hopeless and helpless doth Ægeon wend,
But to procrastinate his lifeless end.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter ANTIPHOLUS (1) of Syracuse, DROMIO (2) of Syracuse, *and* First Merchant (3) *from L.*

First Mer. (*C*). Therefore give out you are of Epidamnum,
Lest that your goods too soon be confiscate.
This very day a Syracusian merchant[2]
Is apprehended for arrival here;
And, not being able to buy out his life,
According to the statute of the town,
Dies ere the weary sun set in the west.
There is your money that I had to keep.

Ant. S.[3] (*R C*). Go bear it to the Centaur, where we host, [*Crosses to C.*
And stay there, Dromio, till I come to thee.

[1] *Crosses to L, then up L.*

Within this hour it will be dinner-time:
Till that, I'll view the manners of the town,
Peruse the traders, gaze upon the buildings,
And then return, and sleep within mine inn;
For with long travel I am stiff and weary.
Get thee away. [*Goes up to read parchment L C.*

Dro. S. (*L C*). Many a man would take you at your word,
And go indeed, having so good a mean.
[*Exit L.*

Ant. S. (*C*). A trusty villain, sir; that very oft,
When I am dull with care and melancholy,
Lightens my humour with his merry jests.
What, will you walk with me about the town,
And then go to my inn, and dine with me?

First Mer. (*R C*). I am invited, sir, to certain merchants,
Of whom I hope to make much benefit;
I crave your pardon.[1] Soon at five o'clock,
Please you, I'll meet with you upon the mart,
And afterward consort you till bed-time:
My present business calls me from you now.
[*Crosses to L.*

Ant. S. Farewell till then: I will go lose myself,

[1]*Antipholus stays up C; continues reading the parchment; he seems fascinated by it.*

[2]*He here finishes the reading and is interrupted by Dromio, who comes on at L and fusses; Antipholus goes down to R C.*

[3]*The Dromios should speak rather slowly, as their brains and flow of language are not so ample as their masters.*'

And wander up and down to view the city.

First Mer.[1] Sir, I commend you to your own content. [*Exit L.*

Ant. S. He that commends me to mine own content
Commends me to the thing I cannot get.
I to the world am like a drop of water,
That in the ocean seeks another drop;
Who, falling there to find his fellow forth,
Unseen, inquisitive, confounds himself;
So I, to find a mother and a brother,
In quest of them, unhappy, lose myself.[2]

Enter DROMIO of Ephesus.

Here comes the almanac of my true date.
What now? how chance thou art return'd so soon?

Dro. E.[3] (*L C*). Return'd so soon! rather approach'd too late:
The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit;
The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;
My mistress made it one upon my cheek:
She is so hot, because the meat is cold;
The meat is cold, because you come not home;
You come not home, because you have no stomach;

[1]*Getting a little angry.*
[2]*Laughing it off — a big "Oh!"*
[3]*Comes right up to Dromio.*
[4]*Dromio taking it humorously.*
[5]*Clapping his hands to express emphasis.*
[6]*In blank amazement.*

You have no stomach, having broke your fast;
But we, that know what 'tis to fast and pray,
Are penitent for your default to-day.

Ant. S.[1] Stop in your wind, sir: tell me this, I pray:
Where have you left the money that I gave you?

Dro. E.[2] O,—sixpence, that I had o' Wednesday last
To pay the saddler for my mistress' crupper?
The saddler had it, sir; I kept it not.

Ant. S.[3] I am not in a sportive humour now:
Tell me, and dally not, where is the money?
We being strangers here, how darest thou trust
So great a charge from thine own custody?

Dro. E.[4] I pray you, jest, sir, as you sit at dinner:
I from my mistress come to you in post;
If I return, I shall be post indeed,
For she will score your fault upon my pate.

Ant. S. Come, Dromio, come, these jests are out of season;
Reserve them till a merrier hour than this.
Where[5] is the gold I gave in charge to thee?

Dro. E.[6] To me, sir? why, you gave no gold to me.

[1]*Approaching him threateningly.*

[2]*Dromio, of course, answers in blank amazement.*

[3]*Pointing to house at R; make use of the gesture to explain to the audience.*

[4]*Clapping his hands to express the emphasis.*

[5]*Dromio rubs himself, his head, elbows, etc.*

[6]*Expressing this with a threatening gesture of the right hand.*

[7]*Still pointing to the Phœnix.*

Ant. S.[1] Come on, sir knave, have done your foolishness,
And tell me how thou hast disposed thy charge.
Dro. E. My charge was but to fetch you from the mart
Home to your house,[2] the Phœnix, sir, to dinner:
My mistress and her sister stays for you.[3]
Ant. S. Now, as I am a Christian, answer me,
In what safe place you have bestow'd my money;
Or I shall break that merry sconce of yours,
That stands on tricks when I am undisposed:
Where is the thousand marks thou had'st of me?[4]
Dro. E.[5] I have some marks of yours upon my pate,
Some of my mistress' marks upon my shoulders;
But not a thousand marks between you both.
If I should pay your worship those again,
Perchance you will not bear them patiently.[6]
Ant. S. (*Coming C to him, threateningly.*)
Thy mistress' marks? what mistress, slave, hast thou?
Dro. E.[7] Your worship's wife, my mistress at the Phœnix;
She that doth fast till you come home to dinner,
And prays that you will hie you home to dinner.

Luciana

[1]*He hits him, driving him round; then up to L.*

[2]*Dromio makes a dash and runs off L.*

[3]*Goes up to L.*

Note.— Always move to the exit place a line or so before actually going off stage.

[4]*Luciana comes first out of house R, crossing to L, looking about; Adriana follows quite agitated.*

[5]*Adriana sits on seat R C, stamping her foot.*

Adriana

Ant. S.[1] What, wilt thou flout me thus unto my face,
Being forbid? There, take you that, sir knave.

Dro. E. What mean you, sir? for God's sake, hold your hands!
Nay, an you will not, sir, I'll take my heels.

[*Exit L.*[2]

Ant. S. (*C*). Upon my life, by some device or other
The villain is o'er-raught of all my money.
They say this town is full of cozenage;
If it prove so, I will be gone the sooner.
I'll to the Centaur,[3] to go seek this slave:
I greatly fear my money is not safe.

[*Exit L* 3.

Enter ADRIANA *and* LUCIANA[4] *R.*

Adr. (*R*).[5] Neither my husband nor the slave return'd,
That in such haste I sent to seek his master!
Sure, Luciana, it is two o'clock.

Luc. (*L*). Perhaps some merchant hath invited him,
And from the mart he's somewhere gone to dinner.

Good sister, let us dine, and never fret:
A man is master of his liberty:
Time is their master; and when they see time,
They'll go or come: if so, be patient, sister.

Adr. Why should their liberty than ours be more?

Luc. Because their business still lies out o' door.

Adr. Look, when I serve him so, he takes it ill.

Luc. O, know he is the bridle of your will.

Adr. There's none but asses will be bridled so.

Luc. Why, headstrong liberty is lash'd with woe.

There's nothing situate under heaven's eye
But hath his bound, in earth, in sea, in sky:
The beasts, the fishes, and the winged fowls
Are their males' subjects and at their controls:
Men more divine, the masters of all these,
Lords of the wide world and wild watery seas.

Adr. But, were you wedded, you would bear some sway.

Luc. Ere I learn love, I'll practise to obey.

[1]*She rises and goes R, then up stage, then down by the time Dromio appears.*

[2]*Dromio appears distracted at L; sees the women and goes down L; Luciana up C.*

[3]*Luciana remains up C as if still looking out for her brother.*

Adr. How if your husband start some other where?

Luc. Till he come home again, I would forbear.

Adr.[1] Patience unmoved! no marvel though she pause;
They can be meek that have no other cause.

Luc. Well, I will marry one day, but to try.
Here comes your man[2]; now is your husband nigh.

Enter DROMIO of Ephesus.

Adr. (*R*). Say, is your tardy master now at hand?

Dro. E (*L*). Nay, he's at two hands with me, and that my two ears can witness.

Adr. Say, didst thou speak with him? know'st thou his mind?

Dro. E. Ay, ay, he told his mind upon mine ear:
Beshrew his hand, I scarce could understand it.

Luc.[3] Spake he so doubtfully, thou couldst not feel his meaning?

Dro. E. Nay, he struck so plainly, I could too well feel his blows; and withal so

[1]*Dromio crosses to C; Luciana comes down horrified; the women are both horrified, reiterating the word "mad."*

[2]*Dromio keeps on turning to the women. After each sentence he says: "My gold, quoth he," each time to Luciana with an imitation of Antipholus's manner.*

[3]*Adriana is furious at this; Luciana is frightened. It seems he must be mad.*

doubtfully, that I could scarce understand them.

Adr. But say, I prithee, is he coming home?
It seems he hath great care to please his wife.

Dro. E.[1] Why, mistress, sure my master is gone mad.

Adr. Gone mad, you villain!

Dro. E. Sure he is gone mad!
When I desired him to come home to dinner,
He ask'd me for a thousand marks in gold:
"'Tis dinner-time," quoth I; "My gold!" quoth he:[2]
"Your meat doth burn," quoth I; "My gold!" quoth he:
"Will you come home?" quoth I; "My gold!" qouth he,
"Where is the thousand marks I gave thee, villain?"
"The pig," quoth I, "is burn'd;" "My gold!" quoth he:
"My mistress, sir," quoth I; "Hang up thy mistress!
I know not thy mistress; out on thy mistress!"

Luc.[3] Quoth who?

Dro. E. Quoth my master:

[1]*Adriana almost uses her nails here.*

[2]*Dromio makes a grotesque appeal to them both to let him off. Luciana and Adriana both make determined gestures that he has to go. Luciana goes up stage.*

[3]*Dromio goes up to L; Adriana follows him up, and practically rolls him round and off, as he illustrates playing the game of foot ball with his feet and hands.*

[4]*Luciana comes down to Adriana, who sits exhausted and angry on the seat R C.*

"I know," quoth he, "no house, no wife, no *mistress*."

Adr.[1] Go back again, thou slave, and fetch him home.

Dro. E.[2] Go back again, and be new beaten home?

I prithee send some other messenger.

Adr. Back, slave, or I will break thy pate across.

Dro. E. And he will bless that cross with other beating:

Between you I shall have a holy head.[3]

Adr. Hence, prating peasant! fetch thy master home.

Dro. E. Am I so round with you as you with me,

That like a football you do spurn me thus?

You spurn me hence, and he will spurn me hither:

If I last in this service, you must case me in leather. [*Exit L.*

Luc.[4] Fie, how impatience loureth in your face!

Adr. His company must do his minions grace,

Whilst I at home starve for a merry look.

Hath homely age the alluring beauty took

[1]*Adriana rises and moves impatiently across, and up and down the stage, Luciana trying to console her.*

[2]*Here she weeps and goes up to house R; Luciana follows laughing, for she believes in her brother, and is sure all will come right.*

[3] ⌒ *Slight pause.*

[4]*Antipholus enters L, looks around, then goes down C to R.*

From my poor cheek? then he hath wasted it:
Are my discourses dull? barren my wit?
If voluble and sharp discourse she marr'd,
Unkindness blunts it more than marble hard:

Luc. (*L C*). Self-harming jealousy! fie, beat it hence!

Adr.[1] (*R C*). Unfeeling fools can with such wrongs dispense.

I know his eye doth homage otherwhere;
Or else what lets it but he would be here?
Sister, you know he promised me a chain;
Would that alone, alone he would detain.
Since that my beauty cannot please his eye,
I'll weep[2] what's left away, and weeping die.

Luc. How many fond fools serve mad jealousy!

[*Exeunt into house R, laughing.* [3]

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse *from L.*

Ant. S.[4] The gold I gave to Dromio is laid up
Safe at the Centaur; and the heedful slave
Is wander'd forth, in care to seek me out
By computation and mine host's report.
I could not speak with Dromio since at first

I sent him from the mart. See, here he comes. (*Remains R C.*)

Enter DROMIO of Syracuse *from L.*

How now, sir! is your merry humour alter'd?
As you love strokes, so jest with me again.
You know no Centaur? you received no gold?
Your mistress sent to have me home to dinner?
My house was at the Phœnix? Wast thou mad,
That thus so madly thou didst answer me?

Dro. S. What answer, sir? when spake I such a word?

Ant. S. Even now, even here, not half an hour since.

Dro. S. I did not see you since you sent me hence,
Home to the Centaur, with the gold you gave me.

Ant. S. Villain, thou didst deny the gold's receipt,
And told'st me of a mistress and a dinner;
For which, I hope, thou felt'st I was displeased.

Dro. S. I am glad to see you in this merry vein:

[1]*He exactly repeats the business of beating, but this Dromio, being his man, has to stand it.*

[2]*Having beaten him, he sits down R C.*

[3]*Rubbing his head.*

What means this jest? I pray you, master, tell me.

Ant. S.[1] Yea, dost thou jeer and flout me in the teeth?
Think'st thou I jest? Hold, take thou that, and that. [*Beating him.*

Dro. S. Hold, sir, for God's sake! now your jest is earnest:
Upon what bargain do you give it me?

Ant. S.[2] Because that I familiarly sometimes
Do use you for my fool, and chat with you,
Your sauciness will jest upon my love,
And make a common of my serious hours.
If you will jest with me, know my aspect,
And fashion your demeanour to my looks,
Or I will beat this method in your sconce.

Dro. S.[3] Sconce call you it? so you would leave battering, I had rather have it a head: an you use these blows long, I must get a sconce for my head, and insconce it too; or else I shall seek my wit in my shoulders. But, I pray, sir, why am I beaten?

Ant. S. Dost thou not know?

Dro. S. Nothing, sir, but that I am beaten.

Ant S. Shall I tell you why?

[1]*Dromio goes to him C; Antipholus seated R C.*

[2]*The contrast between master and man is decided. Antipholus should speak lightly and easily; the man is slow and deliberate in his replies.*

Dro. S.[1] Ay, sir, and wherefore; for they say every why hath a wherefore.

Ant. S. Why, first — for flouting me; and then, wherefore,—

For urging it the second time to me.

Dro. S. Was there ever any man thus beaten out of season,

When in the why and the wherefore is neither rhyme nor reason?

Well, sir, I thank you.[2]

Ant. S. Thank me, sir! for what?

Dro. S. Marry, sir, for this something that you gave me for nothing.

Ant. S. I'll make you amends next, to give you nothing for something. But say, sir, is it dinner-time?

Dro. S. No, sir: I think the meat wants that I have.

Ant. S. In good time, sir; what's that?

Dro. S. Basting.

Ant. S. Well, sir, then 'twill be dry.

Dro. S. If it be, sir, I pray you, eat none of it.

Ant. S. Your reason?

Dro. S. Lest it make you choleric, and purchase me another dry basting

[1]*Antipholus rises and goes L C; Dromio retreats L; at the same time Adriana appears at the door, making signs of delight at the return of her husband, forgetting all her anger at his non-return. Luciana follows at door.*

[2]*Antipholus L C turns and sees them, Dromio L; they both stand dumfounded; the women both advance very slowly as far as C.*

[3]*Adriana here throws her arms around Antipholaus; Dromio is horrified.*

[4]*Antipholus excuses himself and quickly puts her arms away from him.*

[5]*Antipholus speaks very deliberately, trying to be polite under such awkward circumstances, shrinking all the time toward L C and L. Dromio shrinks also behind his master, down L.*

Ant. S.[1] Well, sir, learn to jest in good time:
there's a time for all things.
But soft! who wafts us yonder!

Enter ADRIANA *and* LUCIANA.

Adr.[2] Ay, ay, Antipholus, look strange and
frown:
Some other mistress hath thy sweet aspects;
I am not Adriana nor thy wife.
The time was once when thou unurged wouldst
vow
That never words were music to thine ear,
That never object pleasing in thine eye,
That never touch well welcome to thy hand,
That never meat sweet-savour'd in thy taste,
Unless I spake, or look'd, or touch'd, or carved
to thee.[3]
How comes it now, my husband, O, how comes it,
That thou art then estranged from thyself?
Thyself I call it, being strange to me,
That, undividable, incorporate,
Am better than thy dear self's better part.[4]
Ah, do not tear away thyself from me!

Ant. S.[5] Plead you to me, fair dame? I know
you not:

[1]*Luciana R; Adriana R C; Antipholus L C; Dromio L.*

[2]*Adriana crosses again to C; Luciana goes up C to R.*

[3]*Luciana comes down to R by Adriana; both women stand amazed with surprise and indignation.*

In Ephesus I am but two hours old,[1]
As strange unto your town as to your talk;
Who, every word by all my wit being scann'd,
Wants wit in all one word to understand.

Luc. (*Crosses to C.*) Fie, brother! how the world is changed with you!

When were you wont to use my sister thus?
She sent for you by Dromio home to dinner.

Ant. S. By Dromio?

Dro. S. By me?

Adr.[2] By thee; and this thou didst return from him.

That he did buffet thee, and, in his blows,
Denied my house for his, me for his wife.

Ant. S. Did you converse, sir, with this gentlewoman?

What is the course and drift of your compact?

Dro. S. I, sir? I never saw her till this time.[3]

Ant. S. Villain, thou liest; for even her very words

Didst thou deliver to me on the mart.

Dro. S. I never spake with her in all my life.

Ant. S. How can she thus then call us by our names?

Unless it be by inspiration.

[1]*She turns to Luciana, sits and weeps.*

[2]*Antipholus is not sure whether he is sane. After due consideration he thinks at any rate he may get a good dinner; they go down R conversing.*

[3]*Luciana goes up to the house; Dromio keeps at a comfortable distance down L; Adriana, R C, is still unhappy.*

Adr. How ill agrees it with your gravity
To counterfeit thus grossly with your slave,
Abetting him to thwart me in my mood![1]
Be it my wrong you are from me exempt,
But wrong not that wrong with a more contempt.

Ant. S.[2] To me she speaks; she moves me for her theme:
What, was I married to her in my dream?
Or sleep I now, and think I hear all this?
What error drives our eyes and ears amiss?
Until I know this sure uncertainty,
I'll entertain the offer'd fallacy.

Luc.[3] Dromio, go bid the servants spread for dinner.

Dro. S. O, for my beads! I cross me for a sinner.
This is the fairy land: O spite of spites!
We talk with goblins, owls, and sprites:
If we obey them not, this will ensue,
They'll suck our breath, or pinch us black and blue.

Luc. Why prate'st thou to thyself, and answer'st not?
Dromio, thou drone, thou snail, thou slug, thou sot!

[1]*Dromio creeps across to his master, who is now C; pulls the corner of his drapery as if uncertain if he were alive or no.*

[2]*Dromio retreats once more to L.*

[3]*Luciana is up on steps of house.*

[4]*She rises as if her mind were made up.*

[5]*She goes to Antipholus, takes his hand and leads him up to house. She keeps on turning to speak to Dromio, who starts each time. The speech is made very humorous in accord with the situation; at the end she goes up the steps, Antipholus waiting at the bottom. He slightly wavers, and goes a little down stage to speak. Dromio is still huddling down L; but eventually creeps to house after all have gone in.*

Dro. S.[1] I am transformed, master, am not I?
Ant. S. I think thou art in mind, and so am I.
Dro. S. Nay, master, both in mind and in my shape.
Ant. S. Thou hast thine own form.
Dro. S.[2] No, I am an ape.
Luc.[3] If thou art changed to aught, 'tis to an ass.
Dro. S. 'Tis true; she rides me, and I long for grass.
'Tis so, I am an ass; else it could never be
But I should know her as well as she knows me.
Adr.[4] Come, come, no longer will I be a fool,
To put the finger in the eye and weep,
Whilst man and master laughs my woes to scorn.
Come, sir, to dinner.[5] Dromio, keep the gate.
Husband, I'll dine above with you to-day,
And shrive you of a thousand idle pranks.
Sirrah, if any ask you for your master,
Say he dines forth, and let no creature enter.
Come, sister. Dromio, play the porter well.
Ant. S. Am I in earth, in heaven, or in hell?
Sleeping or waking? mad or well-advised?
Known unto these, and to myself disguised!

The scene ends in great animation.

Music plays as if within the house.

A short interval.

The music should be quaint, old or even modern Greek. It is obtainable.

The costumes are Greek. Be careful that the twins are exactly alike in costume and of course in appearance. By wearing small beards, moustaches, and wigs alike, also "Phrygian" caps, the similarity is easily managed.

I'll say as they say, and persevere so,
And in this mist at all adventures go.

Dro. S. Master, shall I be porter at the gate?

Adr. Ay; and let none enter, lest I break your pate.

Luc. Come, come, Antipholus, we dine too late. [*Exeunt into house R.*

Antipholus of Ephesus

Balthazar and Antipholus come together and go R C and C. Angelo follows, going L C; Dromio carrying a short stick slinks behind L C in the background. He does not want any more "basting."

Opening of the scene is bright, they come on chatting — the music is still playing as if there was a small feast at the house R.

[1]*He turns C and finds Dromio up stage L C; Dromio goes down warily and slowly. He rubs himself about the arms and shoulders as he describes his beatings. Make the rhymes decided on the last words. Sound the k's strongly.*

ACT II

Scene I. *Before the house of Antipholus of Ephesus.*

Enter Antipholus of Ephesus, Dromio of Ephesus, Angelo, *and* Balthazar *from R.*

Ant. E. Good Signior Angelo, you must excuse us all;
My wife is shrewish when I keep not hours;
Say that I linger'd with you at your shop
To see the making of her carcanet,
And that to-morrow you will bring it home.
But here's a villain that would face me down[1]
He met me on the mart, and that I beat him,
And charged him with a thousand marks in gold,
And that I did deny my wife and house.
Thou drunkard, thou, what didst thou mean by this?

Dro. E. Say what you will, sir, but I know what I *know*;

[1]*As he says this he turns, spreads out his heels, and struts up stage C.*

[2]*Balthazar has sat down on seat R C.*

That you beat me at the mart, I have your hand to *show*:
If the skin were parchment, and the blows you gave were *ink*,
Your own handwriting would tell you what I *think*.

Ant. E. I *think* thou art an ass.

Dro. E. Marry, so it doth appear
By the wrongs I suffer, and the blows I bear.
I should kick, being kick'd; and, being at that pass,
You would keep from my heels, and beware of an *ass*.[1]

Ant. E. You're sad, Signior Balthazar: pray God our cheer
May answer my good will and your good welcome here.[2]

Bal. I hold your dainties cheap, sir, and your welcome dear.

Ant. E. O, Signior Balthazar, either at flesh or fish,
A table full of welcome makes scarce one dainty dish.

Bal. Good meat, sir, is common: that every churl affords.

[1]*Balthazar rises, goes down R. Dromio goes to door with stick. Antipholus stands C back to audience. Dromio hits something near, such as a post, with his stick; if only canvas, do not touch it. He pauses after each name and wonders why they don't rush to the door and answer. There is a clatter of dishes and plates from inside. The Dromios must try to imitate each other. On hearing Syracuse, Ephesus goes nearly crazy outside the door.*

[2]*Angelo L, Antipholus C, Dromio R C, Balthazar R.*

Angelo

Ant. E. And welcome more common; for that's nothing but words.

Bal. Small cheer and great welcome make a merry feast.

Ant. E. Ay, to a niggardly host and more sparing guest:

But, soft! my door is lock'd.— Go bid them let us in.[1]

Dro. E. Maud, Bridget, Marian, Cicely, Gillian, Ginn!

Dro. S. [*Within*] Mome, malt-horse, capon, coxcomb, idiot, patch!

Either get thee from the door, or sit down at the hatch.

Dost thou conjure for wenches, that thou call'st for such store,

When one is one too many? Go get thee from the door.

Dro. E. What patch is made our porter? My master stays in the street.

Dro. S. [*Within*] Let him walk from whence he came, lest he catch cold on 's feet.

Ant. E.[2] Who talks within there? ho, open the door!

[1]*Dromio Ephesus drops into seat R C with back to audience as he says "O!" shakes his stick at the voice inside at R.*

[2]*Luce is the cook, who later appears. She should have a manly voice and a burly appearance.*

[3]*He offers to lay his stick about them.*

Dro. S. [*Within*] Right, sir; I'll tell you when, an you'll tell me wherefore.

Ant. E. Wherefore? for my dinner: I have not dined to-day.

Dro. S. [*Within*] Nor to-day here you must not; come again when you may.

Ant. E. What art thou that keepest me out from the house I owe?

Dro. S. [*Within*] The porter for this time, sir, and my name is Dromio.

Dro.[1] *E.* O, villain, thou hast stolen both mine office and my name!
The one ne'er got me credit, the other mickle blame.
If thou hadst been Dromio to-day in my place,
Thou wouldst have changed thy face for a name, or thy name for an ass.

Luc.[2] [*Within*] What a coil is there, Dromio? who are those at the gate!

Dro. E. Let my master in, Luce.

Luce. [*Within*] 'Faith, no; he comes too late;
And so tell your master.

Dro. E.[3] O Lord, I must laugh!
Have at you with a proverb; — Shall I set in my staff?

[1]*Gives Antipholus the stick.*

Be careful of all these rhymes. The voices within the house should be loud.

[2]*There is still a noise of revelry within: plates, music, pp, etc.; laughter. It all makes the right master very angry; for both he and Dromio are hungry.*

[3]*Dromio dances with pleasure, keeping time to the words and exits with great glee. Angelo, who is a red-faced, cheery being, short and fat, is hugely amused at all this. The other merchant is more serious and tries to console his friend.*

Ant. E. Thou baggage, let me in.

Luce. [*Within*] Can you tell for whose sake?

Dro. E.[1] Master, knock the door hard.

Luce. [*Within*] Let him knock till it ache.

Ant. E. You'll cry for this, minion, if I beat the door down.

Luce. [*Within*] What needs all that, and a pair of stocks in the town?

Adr. [*Within*] Who is that at the door that keeps all this noise?

Dro. S. [*Within*] By my troth, your town is troubled with unruly boys.

Ant. E. Are you there, wife? you might have come before.

Adr. [*Within*][2] Your wife, sir knave! go get you from the door.

Ant. E. Go fetch me something: I'll break ope the gate.

Dro. S. [*Within*] Break any breaking here, and I'll break your knave's pate.

Ant. E. Well, I'll break in: go borrow me a crow.

Dro. E.[3] A crow without feather? Master, mean you so?

[1]*Antipholus indicated that the Porcupine is on the L of the stage; Antipholus consults with his friend, the merchant, over the trick to make Adriana jealous.*

The end of the scene is bright, all of them laughing at the joke of a man being shut out of his own dwelling. They all go off up L, Antipholus looking back as if he intended to be revenged.

For a fish without a fin, there's a fowl without
a feather:
If a crow help us in, sirrah, we'll pluck a crow
together.
Ant. E. (*C*). Go get thee gone; fetch me an
iron crow. (*Dromio runs off L.*)
Bal. (*R*). Have patience, sir: O, let it not be so!
Herein you war against your reputation,
And draw within the compass of suspect
The unviolated honour of your wife.
Be ruled by me: depart in patience,
And let us to the Tiger all to dinner;
And about evening come yourself alone
To know the reason of this strange restraint.
Ant. E. You have prevail'd: I will depart
in quiet,
And, in despite of mirth, mean to be merry.
I know a wench of excellent discourse,
Pretty and witty; wild, and yet, too, gentle:
There will we dine.
[*To Ang.*][1] Get you home,
And fetch the chain; by this I know 'tis made:
Bring it, I pray you, to the Porpentine;
For there's the house: that chain will I bestow
Be it for nothing but to spite my wife —

[1]*Luciana comes first, followed by Antipholus, who is still amazed at the meaning of her words, addressing him as a brother. She crosses to L C. Antipholus remains R C.*

Upon mine hostess there: good sir, make haste.
Since mine own doors refuse to entertain me,
I'll knock elsewhere, to see if they'll disdain me.

Ang. I'll meet you at that place some hour hence.

Ant. E. Do so. This jest shall cost me some expense. [*Exeunt L U.*

Enter LUCIANA, *R, with* ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse.

Luc. (*L C*). And may it be that you have quite forgot
A husband's office? shall, Antipholus,
Even in the spring of love, thy love-springs rot?
Shall love, in building, grow so ruinous?
If you did wed my sister for her wealth,
Then for her wealth's sake use her with more kindness:
Or if you like elsewhere, do it by stealth;
Muffle your false love with some show of blindness:
Let not my sister read it in your eye;
Be not thy tongue thy own shame's orator;
Look sweet, speak fair, become disloyalty;
Apparel vice like virtue's harbinger;

[1]*His ardour makes the scene more humorous, but the actors must be unconscious of it.*

Bear a fair presence, though your heart be tainted;
Teach sin the carriage of a holy saint;
Be secret-false: what need she be acquainted?
What simple thief brags of his own attaint?
Then, gentle brother, get you in again;
Comfort my sister, cheer her, call her wife;
'Tis holy sport, to be a little vain,
When the sweet breath of flattery conquers strife.

Ant. S.[1] (*C*). Sweet mistress — what your name is else, I know not,
Nor by what wonder you do hit of mine —
Less in your knowledge and your grace you show not
Than our earth's wonder; more than earth divine.
Teach me, dear creature, how to think and speak;
Lay open to my earthy-gross conceit,
Smother'd in errors, feeble, shallow, weak,
The folded meaning of your words' deceit.
Against my soul's pure truth why labour you
To make it wander in an unknown field?
Are you a god? would you create me new?

[1]*As Antipholus approaches her, she shrinks and crosses to R, as if going to the house.*

[2]*This speech is very ardent.*

Transform me, then, and to your power I'll yield.
But if that I am I, then well I know
Your weeping sister is no wife of mine,
Far more, far more to you do I decline.[1]

Luc. (*R C*). What, are you mad, that you do reason so?

Ant. S. Not mad, but mated; how, I do not know.

Luc. It is a fault that springeth from your eye.

Ant. S. For gazing on your beams, fair sun, being by.

Luc. Gaze where you should, and that will clear your sight.

Ant. S. As good to wink, sweet love, as look on night.

Luc. (*R C.*) Why call you me love? call my sister so.

Ant. S. Thy sister's sister.

Luc. That's my sister.

Ant. S.[2] (*C*). No;
It is thyself, mine own self's better part,
Mine eye's clear eye, my dear heart's dearer heart,

[1]*As he approaches her she runs up to the house R. Luciana seems conscious of some mysterious mistake.*

[2]*Dromio runs out, after Luciana has entered.*

[3]*Antipholus sits on seat laughing at Dromio's plight.*

My food, my fortune, and my sweet hope's aim,
My sole earth's heaven, and my heaven's claim.

Luc. All this my sister is, or else should be.

Ant. S.[1] Call thyself sister, sweet, for I aim thee.
Thee will I love, and with thee lead my life:
Thou hast no husband yet, nor I no wife.
Give me thy hand.

Luc. (*R.*) O, soft, sir! hold you still:
I'll fetch my sister, to get her good will.

[*Exit R U.*

Enter DROMIO of Syracuse *from behind house R.*

Ant. S. Why, how now, Dromio![2] where runn'st thou so fast?

Dro. S. (*Crosses to L C.*) Do you know me, sir? am I Dromio? am I your man? am I myself?

Ant. S.[3] (*R C*). Thou art Dromio, thou art my man, thou art thyself.

Dro. S. I am an ass, I am a woman's man, and besides myself.

Ant. S. What woman's man? and how besides thyself?

Dro. S. Marry, sir, besides myself, I am

[1]*Dromio points to the kitchen entrance behind house R.*

[2]*Lifting up his foot.*

Antipholus of course, laughs at all Dromio's replies.

due to a woman; one that claims me, one that haunts me, one that will have me.

Ant. S. What claim lays she to thee?

Dro. S. Marry, sir, such claim as you would lay to your horse; and she would have me as a beast: not that, I being a beast, she would have me; but that she, being a very beastly creature, lays claim to me.

Ant. S. What is she?

Dro. S. A very reverent body; ay, such a one as a man may not speak of, without he say Sir-reverence. I have but lean luck in the match, and yet is she a wondrous fat marriage.

Ant. S. How dost thou mean a fat marriage?

Dro. S.[1] Marry, sir, she's the kitchen-wench, and all grease; and I know not what use to put her to, but to make a lamp of her, and run from her by her own light. I warrant, her rags, and the tallow in them, will burn a Poland winter: if she lives till doomsday, she'll burn a week longer than the whole world.

Ant. S. What complexion is she of?

Dro. S.[2] Swart, like my shoe, but her face nothing like so clean kept.

Ant. S. That's a fault that water will mend.

[1]*Dromio must keep up his slow and deliberate speech. He stands L at C of his master all the time.*

[2]*The mention of America is curious. He is, of course, referring to that part of it which was discovered over a century previously, mostly by Spaniards and Italians.*

Dro. S. No, sir, 'tis in grain; Noah's flood could not do it.

Ant. S. What's her name?

Dro. S.[1] Nell, sir; but her name and three quarters, that's an ell and three quarters, will not measure her from hip to hip.

Ant. S. Then she bears some breadth?

Dro. S. No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip: she is spherical, like a globe; I could find out countries in her.

Ant. S. Where Scotland?

Dro. S. I found it by the barrenness; hard in the palm of the hand.

Ant. S. Where France?

Dro. S. In her forhead; armed and reverted, making war against her heir.

Ant. S. Where England?

Dro. S. I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them; but I guess it stood in her chin, by the salt rheum that ran between France and it.

Ant. S. Where Spain?

Dro. S. 'Faith, I saw it not; but I felt it hot in her breath.

Ant. S. Where America,[2] the Indies?

[1]*Antipholus rises and has a good laugh, then goes up L and up and down, giving directions. Dromio crosses to R, looks cautiously around at the house R.*

[2]*Luce, the cook, rushes in from the back of the house, spies Dromio; he runs for his life all around the stage, she after him with her hands covered with flour; as a last resource, finding she cannot catch him, she throws the pudding at him. She then shakes the rolling-pin at him and retires behind house R. Antipholus stands roaring with laughter.*

[3]*After Luce's exit Dromio hurries off saying his speech.*

Dro. S. Oh, sir, upon her nose, all o'er embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain.

To conclude, this drudge, or diviner, laid claim to me; called me Dromio; swore I was assured to her.

I, amazed, ran from her as a witch:
And, I think, if my breast had not been made
of faith, and my heart of steel,
She had transform'd me to a curtal dog, and
made me turn i' the wheel.

[*Crosses to L.*

Ant. S.[1] Go hie thee presently, post to the road:
An if the wind blow any way from shore,
I will not harbour in this town to-night:
If any bark put forth, come to the mart,
Where I will walk till thou return to me.
If every one knows us, and we know none,
'Tis time, I think, to trudge, pack, and be gone.[2]

Dro. S.[3] As from a bear a man would run for life,
So fly I from her that would be my wife.

[*Exit L.*

[1]*Antipholus goes C to R and is just turning to leave the house R, when Angelo enters L.*

Ant. S.[1] There's none but witches do inhabit here;
And therefore 'tis high time I were hence.
She that doth call me husband, even my soul
Doth for a wife abhor. But her fair sister,
Possess'd with such a gentle sovereign grace,
Of such enchanting presence and discourse,
Hath almost made me traitor to myself:
But, lest myself be guilty to self-wrong,
I'll stop mine ears against the mermaid's song.

Enter ANGELO *with the chain up L.*

Ang. Master Antipholus —
Ant. S. Ay, that's my name.
Ang. (*L C*). I know it well, sir: lo, here is the chain.
I thought to have ta'en you at the Porpentine:
The chain unfinish'd made me stay thus long.
Ant. S (*C*). What is your will that I shall do with this?
Ang. What please yourself, sir; I have made it for you.
Ant. S. Made it for me, sir! I bespoke it not.
Ang. Not once, nor twice, but twenty times you have.

[1]*Angelo points to house R; he has hurried with the chain so that Antipholus might make amends to his wife.*

[2]*The fussy old merchant thinks he has done a good turn to Antipholus and a good day's work for himself. He goes off roaring with laughter, which is so infectious that Antipholus joins in.*

[3]*He puts the chain on; looks back at the house R, then decides to go.*

There is another short interval. These intervals can be at the discretion of the manager, remembering always that the action of this play is swift and the continuity of the story is slightly broken if the intermissions are long.

[4]*This merchant can be the same as the first merchant, or even Balthazar, if the available cast is limited.*

Go home[1] with it, and please your wife withal;
And soon at supper-time I'll visit you,
And then receive my money for the chain.

Ant. S. I pray you, sir, receive the money now,
For fear you ne'er see chain nor money more.

Ang. You are a merry man, sir: fare you well. [*Exit.*[2]

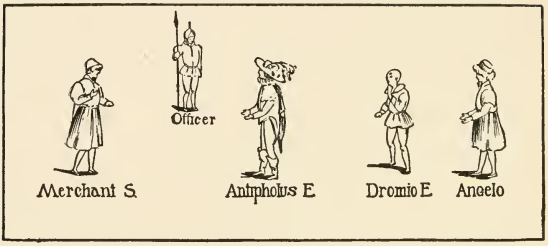
Ant. S. What I should think of this, I cannot tell:
But this I think, there's no man is so vain
That would refuse so fair an offer'd chain.
I see a man here needs not live by shifts,
When in the streets he meets such golden gifts.
I'll to the mart, and there for Dromio stay:
If any ship put out, then straight away.[3]

[*Exit L.*

INTERVAL

Enter Second Merchant,(1) ANGELO,(2) *and an* Officer (3) *from L.*

Sec. Mer.[4] (*R C*). You know since Pentecost the sum is due,
And since I have not much importuned you;
Nor now I had not, but that I am bound



Note.— If the play is given on the "Shakespeare" stage, the costumes should be of that period.

For a scenic stage, Greek costuming is best.

To Persia, and want guilders for my voyage:
Therefore make present satisfaction,
Or I'll attach you by this officer.

Ang. (*L C*). Even just the sum that I do owe to you
Is growing to me by Antipholus;
And in the instant that I met with you
He had of me a chain: at five o'clock
I shall receive the money for the same.
Pleaseth you walk with me down to his house,
I will discharge my bond, and thank you too.

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus *and* DROMIO of Ephesus *from Phryne's house L.*

Off. That labour may you save: see where he comes.

Ant. E. While I go to the goldsmith's house, go thou
And buy a rope's end: that will I bestow
Among my wife and her confederates,
For locking me out of my doors by day.
But, soft! I see the goldsmith. Get thee gone;
Buy thou a rope, and bring it home to me.

Dro. E. I buy a thousand pound a year: I buy a rope. [*Exit quickly up L.*

[1]*Angelo brings out of his pouch a small parchment with the account of the chain-making, indicating to Antipholus that he owes money to the merchant.*

[2]*Antipholus wants the goldsmith to take the merchant to his home and get payment.*

Ant. E. (*C*). A man is well holp up that trusts to you:
I promised your presence and the chain;
But neither chain nor goldsmith came to me.
Belike you thought our love would last too long,
If it were chain'd together, and therefore came not.

Ang.[1] (*L*). Saving your merry humour, here's the note
How much your chain weighs to the utmost carat,
The fineness of the gold, and chargeful fashion,
Which doth amount to three odd ducats more
Than I stand debted to this gentleman:
I pray you, see him presently discharged,
For he is bound to sea, and stays but for it.

Ant. E[2] (*C*). I am not furnish'd with the present money;
Besides, I have some business in the town.
Good signior, take the stranger to my house,
And with you take the chain, and bid my wife
Disburse the sum on the receipt thereof:
Perchance I will be there as soon as you.

Ang. (*L C*). Then you will bring the chain to her yourself?

[1]*Antipholus and the merchant here get to high words; the scene is very animated.*

[2]*The merchant and Angelo are very angry and excited; Antipholus looks upon the affair as a joke.*

Ant. E. No; bear it with you, lest I come not time enough.

Ang. Well, sir, I will. Have you the chain about you?

Ant. E. An if I have not, sir, I hope you have;
Or else you may return without your money.[1]

Ang. Nay, come, I pray you, sir, give me the chain:
Both wind and tide stays for this gentleman,
And I, to blame, have held him here too long.

Ant. E. Good Lord! you use this dalliance to excuse
Your breach of promise to the Porpentine.
I should have chid you for not bringing it,
But, like a shrew, you first begin to brawl.

Sec. Mer. (*R*). The hour steals on; I pray you, sir, dispatch.

Ang.[2] (*L*). You hear how he importunes me; — the chain!

Ant. E. (*C*). Why, give it to my wife, and fetch your money.

Ang. (*L*). Come, come, you know I gave it you even now.
Either send the chain, or send me by some token.

[1]*Angelo here almost strikes Antipholus.*

[2]*The officer touches Angelo on the shoulder. He staggers and almost dies of indignation, blowing out his cheeks and looking ridiculous.*

Ant. E. (*C*). Fie, now you run this humour out of breath.
Come, where's the chain? I pray you, let me see it.

Sec. Mer. R. My business cannot brook this dalliance.
Good sir, say whether you'll answer me or no:
If not I'll leave him to the officer.

Ant. E. I answer you! what should I answer you?

Ang.[1] (*L*). The money that you owe me for the chain.

Ant. E. I owe you none till I receive the chain.

Ang. You know I gave it you half an hour since.

Ant. E. You gave me none: you wrong me much to say so.

Ang. You wrong me more, sir, in denying it;
Consider how it stands upon my credit.

Sec. Mer. (*R*). Well, officer, arrest him at my suit.

Off.[2] I do; and charge you in the duke's name to obey me.

Ang. This touches me in reputation.

[1]*Angelo, although under arrest, is able to give a coin to the officer, who leaves him, goes Centre and touches the shoulder of Antipholus.*

The situation here is most humorous.

[2]*The law of arresting people simply under suspicion, is almost as ridiculous here in America, in the present day. This situation might quite easily happen in Boston!*

[3]*Dromio's slow, deliberate delivery of this speech adds to the humour of the situation. He is very stolid.*

Either consent to pay this sum for me,
Or I attach you by this officer.

Ant. E. Consent to pay thee that I never had!
Arrest me, foolish fellow, if thou darest.

Ang.[1] Here is thy fee; arrest him, officer.
I would not spare my brother in this case,
If he should scorn me so apparently.

Off. I do arrest you, sir: you hear the suit.

Ant. E.[2] I do obey thee till I give thee bail.
But, sirrah, you shall buy this sport as dear
As all the metal in your shop will answer.

Ang. Sir, sir, I shall have law in Ephesus,
To your notorious shame; I doubt it not.

Enter DROMIO of Syracuse, *from the bay from L.*

Dro. S.[3] Master, there is a bark of Epidamnum
That stays but till her owner comes aboard,
And then, sir, she bears away. Our fraughtage, sir,
I have convey'd aboard; and I have bought
The oil, the balsamum, and aqua-vitæ.
The ship is in her trim; the merry wind
Blows fair from land: they stay for nought at all
But for their owner, master, and yourself.

[1]*Antipholus goes off with Angelo, followed by the officer. It would be funny if they are chained together. Dromio would then feel in his pouch for the key. The merchant follows. Dromio is left, wondering at it all and what he shall do next. He is afraid to approach the house. He sees Adriana approach and hides in the L corner of the stage. The women go down R and R C. Adriana R C. Dromio keeps on bobbing behind the wing, afraid to come out. Adriana takes the stage R to L C and back to C; all through the scene, Luciana trying to appease her wrath.*

Ant. E. How now! a madman! Why, thou peevish sheep.
What ship of Epidamnum stays for me?
Dro. S. A ship you sent me to, to hire waftage.
Ant. E. Thou drunken slave, I sent thee for a rope,
And told thee to what purpose and what end.
Dro. S. You sent me for a rope's end as soon:
You sent me to the bay, sir, for a bark.
Ant. E. I will debate this matter at more leisure,
And teach your ears to list me with more heed.
To Adriana, villain, hie thee straight:
Give her this key, and tell her, in the desk
That's cover'd o'er with Turkish tapestry
There is a purse of ducats; let her send it:
Tell her I am arrested in the street,
And that shall bail me: hie thee, slave, be gone!
On, officer, to prison till it come.
[*Exeunt Sec. Merchant, Angelo, Officer, and Ant. E. off L*[1].
Dro. S. To Adriana! that is where we dined,
Where Dowsabel did claim me for her husband:
She is too big, I hope, for me to compass.

Thither I must, although against my will,
For servants must their masters' minds fulfil.
[*Goes up L.*

Enter ADRIANA (*2*) *and* LUCIANA (*1*) *from House R.*

Adr. Ah, Luciana, did he tempt thee so?
Mightst thou perceive austerely in his eye
That he did plead in earnest? yea or no?
Look'd he red or pale, or sad or merrily?
What observation madest thou, in this case,
Of his heart's meteors tilting in his face?

Luc. First he denied you had in him no right.

Adr. He meant he did me none; the more my spite.

Luc. Then swore he that he was a stranger here.

Adr. And true he swore, though yet forsworn he were.

Luc. Then pleaded I for you.

Adr. And what said he?

Luc. That love I begg'd for you he begg'd of me.

Adr. With what persuasion did he tempt thy love?

[1]*Adriana sinks on seat R C.*

Luc. With words that in an honest suit might move;
First he did praise my beauty, then my speech.

Adr. Didst speak him fair?

Luc. Have patience, I beseech.

Adr. I cannot, nor I will not, hold me still;
My tongue, though not my heart, shall have his will.
He is deformed, crooked, old, and sere,
Ill-faced, worse bodied, shapeless everywhere;
Vicious, ungentle, foolish, blunt, unkind;
Stigmatical in making, worse in mind.

Luc. Who would be jealous, then, of such a one?
No evil lost is wail'd when it is gone.

Adr.[1] Ah, but I think him better than I say,
My heart prays for him, though my tongue do curse.

Here DROMIO of Syracuse *runs forward L C.*

Dro. S. Here! go; the desk, the purse! sweet, now, make haste.

Luc. (*Crosses to C.*) How hast thou lost thy breath?

Dro. S. By running fast.

[1]*Adriana, horrified, rises R C; Luciana is C; Dromio L C. The women look at each other in surprise.*

[2]*Dromio crosses to C; Luciana to L C.*

[3]*Luciana runs into house R.*

Adr. Where is thy master, Dromio? is he well?

Dro. S. No he's in Tartar limbo, worse than hell.[1]

A devil in an everlasting garment hath him;
One whose hard heart is button'd up with steel;
A fiend, a fury, pitiless and rough;
A wolf, nay, worse; a fellow all in buff;

Adr. Why, man, what is the matter?

Dro. S.[2] I do not know the matter: he is 'rested on the case.

Adr. What, is he arrested? Tell me at whose suit.

Dro. S. I know not at whose suit he is arrested well;

But he's in a suit of buff which 'rested him, that can I tell.
Will you send him, mistress, redemption, the money in his desk?

Adr. Go fetch it, sister. [*Exit Luciana.*[3] This I wonder at,
That he, unknown to me, should be in debt.
Tell me, was he arrested on a band?

Dro. S. Not a on band, but on a stronger thing;

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[1]*A distant bell strikes a deep "one."*

[2]*Luciana comes down R, gives purse to Adriana, who is C; she gives it to Dromio, who is L C*

A chain, a chain! Do you not hear it ring?
[*Bell.*[1]

Adr. What, the chain?

Dro. S. No, no, the bell: 'tis time that I were gone:
It was two ere I left him, and now the clock strikes one.

Adr. The hours come back! that did I never hear.

Dro. S. O, yes; if any hour meet a sergeant, 'a turns back for very fear.

Adr. As if Time were in debt! how fondly dost thou reason!

Dro. S. Time is a very bankrupt, and owes more than he's worth to season.
Nay, he's a thief too: have you not heard men say,
That Time comes stealing on by night and day?
If Time be in debt and theft, and a sergeant in the way,
Hath he not reason to turn back an hour in a day?

Re-enter LUCIANA[2] *with a purse from house R.*

Adr. Go, Dromio; there's the money, bear it straight;
And bring thy master home immediately.

[1]*Adriana turns to Luciana and they go up together to house R. Dromio runs off clutching purse, L. A short interval.*

It is a good thing to turn up lights in an auditorium and let the audience have a little chat for about two or three minutes. In this play this is a good point at which to do it.

[2]*Antipholus of Syracuse is a lighter character than his brother and takes this more humourously.*

[3]*Dromio is still slow and deliberate; his manner of coming on and making announcements should cause much laughter each time. His amazement at seeing the man he thought was arrested — so soon free — is laughable.*

Come, sister.[1] I am press'd down with conceit, —
Conceit, my comfort and my injury.
[*Exeunt up R.*

A short pause here.

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse *from L.*

Ant. S.[2] There's not a man I meet but doth salute me
As if I were their well-acquainted friend;
And every one doth call me by my name.
Some tender money to me; some invite me;
Some other give me thanks for kindnesses;
Some offer me commodites to buy:
Even now a tailor call'd me in his shop,
And show'd me silks that he had bought for me,
And therewithal took measure of my body.
Sure, these are but imaginary wiles,
And Lapland sorcerers in habit here.

Enter DROMIO of Syracuse *from L*

Dro. S. (*L*).[3] Master, here's the gold you sent me for.
What, have you got the picture of old Adam new-apparelled?

[1]*Antipholus goes to L C ⌒ Phryne enters up L, crosses over behind to R C, as if she did not want to startle Antipholus.*

Ant. S. (*C*). What gold is this? what Adam dost thou mean?

Dro. S. (*L C*). Not that Adam that kept the Paradise,

But that Adam that keeps the prison: he that goes in the calf's skin that was killed for the Prodigal; he that came behind you, sir, like an evil angel, and bid you forsake your liberty.

Ant. S. I understand thee not.

Dro. S. No? why, 'tis a plain case.

Ant. S. What, thou meanest an officer?

Dro. S. Ay, sir, the sergeant of the band; he that brings any man to answer it that breaks his band; one that thinks a man always going to bed, and says, "God give you good rest!"

Ant. S. Well, sir, there rest in your foolery. Is there any ship puts forth to-night? may we be gone?

Dro. S. Why, sir, I brought you word an hour since that the bark *Expedition* put forth to-night; and then were you hindered by the sergeant, to tarry for the hoy *Delay*. Here are the angels that you sent for to deliver you.

Ant. S.[1] The fellow is distract, and so am I;

[1]*Antipholus and Dromio both shrink into L corner.*

[2]*Phryne approaches them; they still shrink L.*

And here we wander in illusions:
Some blessed power deliver us from hence!

Enter PHRYNE *from L U E, crosses to R C.*

Phry. Well met, well met, Master Antipholus.
I see, sir, you have found the goldsmith now:
Is that the chain you promised me to-day?

Ant. S.[1] Satan, avoid! I charge thee, tempt me not.

Dro. S. Master, is this Mistress Satan?

Ant. S. It is the devil.

Dro. S. Nay, she is worse, she is the devil's dam; come not near her.

Phry. (*R C*). Your man and you are marvellous merry, sir.
Will you go with me? We'll mend our dinner here?

Dro. S. (*L*). Master, if you do, expect spoon-meat; or bespeak a long spoon.

Ant. S. (*L C*). Why, Dromio?

Dro, S. Marry, he must have a long spoon that must eat with the devil.

Ant. S.[2] (*L C*). Avoid then, fiend! what tell'st thou me of supping?
Thou art, as you are all, a sorceress:
I conjure thee to leave me and be gone.

[1]*Antipholus repulses her.*

[2]*The two men both slope off up L as if they were really afraid.*

[3]*She stands watching them a moment.*

Phry. (*C*). Give me the ring of mine you had at dinner,
Or, for my diamond, the chain you promised,
And I'll be gone, sir, and not trouble you.

Dro. S.[1] (*L C*). Some devils ask but the parings of one's nail,
A rush, a hair, a drop of blood, a pin,
A nut, a cheery-stone;
But she, more covetous, would have a chain.
Master, be wise: and if you give it her,
The devil will shake her chain, and fright us with it.

Phry. I pray you, sir, my ring, or else the chain:
I hope you do not mean to cheat me so.

Ant. S. Avaunt, thou witch! Come, Dromio, let us go.[2]

Dro. S. "Fly pride," says the peacock: mistress, that you know.

[*Exeunt Ant. S. and Dro. S. up L.*

Phry.[3] Now, out of doubt Antipholus is mad,
Else would he never so demean himself.
A ring he hath of mine worth forty ducats,
And for the same he promised me a chain:
Both one and other he denies me now.

[1]*She goes up to the house R.*

[2]*Antipholus comes on, followed closely by the red-haired officer; he almost treads on his heels as they march up and down.*

The reason that I gather he is mad,
Besides this present instance of his rage,
Is a mad tale he told to-day at dinner,
Of his own doors being shut against his entrance.
Belike his wife, acquainted with his fits,
On purpose shut the doors against his way.
My way is now to hie home to his house,[1]
And tell his wife that, being lunatic,
He rush'd into my house, and took perforce
My ring away. This course I fittest choose;
For forty ducats is too much to lose.

[*Exit into house R.*

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus[2] *and the* Officer *from L.*

Ant. E. Fear me not, man; I will not break away:
I'll give thee, ere I leave thee, so much money,
To warrant thee, as I am 'rested for.
My wife is in a wayward mood to-day,
And will not lightly trust the messenger.
That I should be attach'd in Ephesus,
I tell you, 'twill sound harshly in her ears.

[1]*Dromio rushes on at L flourishing and twirling a large rope about six feet long; the officer almost runs away.*

[2]*Antipholus takes rope and hits it hard on the ground, appearing to beat Dromio, who jumps every time; the officer follows around quietly, pleading with him.*

Enter DROMIO of Ephesus,[1] *with a rope's-end, from L.*

Here comes my man; I think he brings the money.

How now, sir! have you that I sent you for?

Dro. E. (*C*). Here's that, I warrant you, will pay them all.

Ant. E. (*C*). But where's the money?

Dro. E. Why, sir, I gave the money for the rope.

Ant. E. Five hundred ducats, villain, for a rope?

Dro. E. I'll serve you, sir, five hundred at the rate.

Ant. E. To what end did I bid thee hie thee home?

Dro. E. To a rope's-end, sir; and to that end am I returned.

Ant. E.[2] And to that end, sir, I will welcome you. [*Beating him.*

Off. Good sir, be patient.

Dro. E. Nay, 'tis for me to be patient; I am in adversity.

Off. Good now, hold thy tongue.

[1]*They are just escaping when a group is seen at the door R, which slowly comes down the stage, Pinch, the quack doctor, first, with Adriana, Luciana and Phryne behind him, holding up his big cloak to hide themselves; Antipholus is L C; Dromio, hiding behind him L, shouts across the stage to Adriana. It appears now that every one on the stage is crazy. The merchant looks on in amazement from R.*

Dro. E. Nay, rather persuade him to hold his hands.

Ant. E. Thou senseless villain!

Dro. E. I would I were senseless, sir, that I might not feel your blows.

Ant. E. Thou art sensible in nothing but blows, and so is an ass.

Dro. E. I am an ass, indeed; you may prove it by my long ears.

Ant. E. Come, go along; my wife is coming yonder.[1]

Enter ADRIANA, LUCIANA, PHRYNE *and* PINCH.

Dro. E. (*L*). Mistress, "respice finem," respect your end or rather, the prophecy like the parrot, "beware the rope's-end."

Ant. E. (*L C*). Wilt thou still talk?

[*Beating him.*

Phry. (*R*). How say you now? is not your husband mad?

Adr. (*R C*). His incivility confirms no less.
Good Doctor Pinch, you are a conjurer;
Establish him in his true sense again,
And I will please you what you will demand.

[1]*Pinch is an eccentric part, eccentrically costumed in a tall conical or sugar-loaf hat, with black gown and gloves on. He darts out his hands as if mesmerizing his subject.*

[2]*Antipholus just boxes his ear, which naturally causes the quack to think he has a madman-subject; he quickly makes all sorts of strange passes with his hands. Dromio presently tries the experiment, to appease his master's disordered mind.*

Luc. (*R*). Alas, how fiery and how sharp he looks!

Phry. Mark how he trembles in his ecstasy!

Pinch.[1] (*C*). Give me your hand, and let me feel your pulse. [*Gliding down stage.*]

Ant. E.[2] There is my hand, and let it feel your ear. [*Striking him.*

Pinch. I charge thee, Satan, housed within this man,
To yield possession to my holy prayers,
And to thy state of darkness hie thee straight:
I conjure thee by all the saints in heaven!

Ant. E. Peace, doting wizard, peace! I am not mad.

Adr. O, that thou wert not, poor distressed soul!

Ant. E. You minion, you, are these your customers?
Did this companion with the saffron face
Revel and feast it at my house to-day,
Whilst upon me the guilty doors were shut,
And I denied to enter in my house?

Adr. O husband, God doth know you dined at home;
Where would you had remain'd until this time,

[1]*Poor Dromio has not dined at all and he signifies the fact.*

[2]*The women are still behind Pinch's cloak.*

Free from these slanders and this open shame!

Ant. E. Dined at home! Thou villain, what sayest thou?

Dro. E.[1] (*L*). Sir, sooth to say, you did not dine at home.

Ant. E. (*L*). Were not my doors lock'd and I shut out?

Dro. E. Perdie, your doors were lock'd and you shut out.

Ant. E. (*L C*). And did not she herself revile me there?

Dro. E. (*L*). Sans fable, she herself reviled you there.

Ant. E. (*L C*). Did not her kitchen-maid rail, taunt, and scorn me?

Dro. E. Certes, she did; the kitchen-vestal scorned you.

Ant. E. And did not I in rage depart from thence?

Dro. E. In verity you did; my bones bear witness,

That since have felt the vigour of his rage.

Adr. Is't good to soothe him in these contraries?[2]

[1]*Dromio almost shakes his head off emphazing the fact that he hasn't seen any money.*

[2]*Dromio holds his hands and the rope up as if appealing to heaven.*

Pinch. It is no shame: the fellow finds his vein,
And, yielding to him, humours well his frenzy.
Ant. E. Thou hast suborn'd the goldsmith to arrest me.
Adr. Alas, I sent you money to redeem you,
By Dromio here, who came in haste for it.
Dro. E.[1] Money by me! heart and good-will you might;
But surely, master, not a rag of money.
Ant. E. Went'st not thou to her for a purse of ducats?
Adr. He came to me, and I deliver'd it.
Luc. And I am witness with her that she did.
Dro. E.[2] God and the rope-maker bear me witness
That I was sent for nothing but a rope!
Pinch. Mistress, both man and master is possess'd;
I know it by their pale and deadly looks:
They must be bound, and laid in some dark room.
Ant. E. Say, wherefore didst thou lock me forth to-day?
And why dost thou deny the bag of gold?

[1]*Here the officer who has been looking on in a frightened state goes up L and beckons on four other soldiers; they come on with ropes and stand up L.*

[2]*Two rush at Antipholus and bind him; two rush at Dromio and bind him.*

[3]*Pinch holds his hands up all the time as if controlling the power over the situation; Adriana weeps on the seat R C, consoled by Luciana.*

[4]*Dromio is resigned to the situation; Antipholus does not like it; he struggles with the officers. Dromio is carried off by the other two and in going up he catches the Doctor between his knees and runs him off the stage up R C. The officer remains behind, so that when Antipholus of Syracuse and Dromio rush in they all, including the officer, scream and disperse all over the stage, for they think the madmen have broken loose. They all rush into the house R.*

Adr. I did not, gentle husband, lock thee forth.

Dro. E. And, gentle master, I received no gold;
But I confess, sir, that we were lock'd out.

Adr. Dissembling villain, thou speak'st false in both.

Ant. E.[1] Dissembling woman, thou art false in all,
And art confederate with a wretched pack
To make a loathsome abject scorn of me:
But with these nails I'll pluck out these false eyes.
That would behold in me this shameful sport.

Enter three or four and offer to bind him.[2] *He strives.*

Adv. O most unhappy day![3]

Ant. E. O most unhappy woman.

Dro. E.[4] Master, I am here enter'd in bond for you.

Ant. E. Out on thee, villain! wherefore dost thou mad me?

Dro. E. Will you be bound for nothing? be mad, good master: cry, The devil!

[1]*There is a great noise off L.*

Luc. God help, poor souls, how idly do they talk!

Adr. Go bear him hence. Sister, go you with me.

[*Exeunt all but* ADRIANA, LUCIANA, Officers *and* PHRYNE.

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse *with his rapier drawn, and* Dromio of Syracuse *from L. Noise off L.*[1]

Luc. God, for thy mercy! they are loose again.

Adr. And come with naked swords.
Let's call more help to have them bound again.

Off. Away! they'll kill us.

[*Exeunt all but* ANT. S. *and* DRO. S.

Ant. S. (*C*). I see these witches are afraid of swords.

Dro. S. (*L*). She that would be your wife now ran from you.

Ant. S. Come to the Centaur; fetch our stuff from thence:
I long that we were safe and sound aboard.

Dro. S. Faith, stay here this night; they will surely do us no harm: you saw they speak us

[1]*This line is very humorous after all the rough treatment, and should get a good laugh.*

[2]*Antipholus goes up to L. After his exit Dromio goes cautiously over to house, shakes his head, and runs off after his master.*

At this point is the last short interval — a little music suggestive of sorrow — as a prelude to Ægeon's scene.

fair, give us gold: *methinks they are such a gentle nation*,[1] that, but for the mountain of mad flesh that claims marriage of me, I could find in my heart to stay here still, and turn witch.

Ant. S.[2] I will not stay to-night for all the town;
Therefore away, to get our stuff aboard.

[*Exeunt up L.*

Note.—In describing the scene as "the same," it is left to the discretion of the manager whether the scenes be changed or not. If there is scenery available, by all means have it used unless it is ugly and "dauby," which is the case with much of it. A little play like this should be carefully and artistically dressed and mounted, and one well got up scene is preferable to half a dozen bad attempts. The Elizabethan setting is particularly well adapted to the play, the canopy, balcony, and side doors supplying every point that is necessary for its swift representation. The positions and stage business here described can just as easily be adapted. The costumes, however, should be strictly "Elizabethan." The best record of the play is that given at Gray's Inn, where conditions would have been similar to such a representation.

ACT III

SCENE I. *Street before Priory (or the same.)*

Enter Second Merchant (1) *and* ANGELO (2).

Ang. C. I am sorry, sir, that I have hinder'd you;
But, I protest, he had the chain of me,
Though most dishonestly he doth deny it.

Sec. Mer. (*R C*). How is the man esteem'd here in the city?

Ang. Of very reverent reputation, sir,
Of credit infinite, highly beloved,
Second to none that lives here in the city:
His word might bear my wealth at any time.

Sec. Mer. Speak softly, yonder, as I think, he walks. [*They go down R C.*

Enter ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse *and* DROMIO of Syracuse *from L.*

Ang. 'Tis so; and that self chain about his neck,

[1]*Antipholus and Dromio are L C and L, Dromio wondering what will happen to them next.*

[2]*Merchant crosses to R C; Angelo R.*

[3]*Antipholus gets angry here just like his brother. Up to this point we have only seen him in the lighter vein.*

Which he forswore most monstrously to have.
Good sir, draw near to me, I'll speak to him;
Signior Antipholus, I wonder much
That you would put me to this shame and trouble;
And, not without some scandal to yourself,
With circumstance and oath so to deny[1]
This chain which now you wear so openly:
Beside the charge, the shame, imprisonment,
You have done wrong to this my honest friend;
Who, but for staying on our controversy,
Had hoisted sail and put to sea to-day:
This chain you had of me; can you deny it?

Ant. S. (*C*). I think I had; I never did deny it.

Sec. Mer.[2] (*R C*). Yes, that you did, sir, and forswore it too.

Ant. S. Who heard me to deny it or forswear it?

Sec. Mer. These ears of mine, thou know'st, did hear thee.

Fie on thee, wretch! 'tis pity that thou livest
To walk where any honest men resort.

Ant. S.[3] Thou art a villain to impeach me thus:

At the height of the quarrel the women return from the house with attendants. This scene should be full of bustle and action. Angelo crosses to L; the merchant crosses to C R; Antipholus to C L; swords cross in the middle of the fight of a few quick passes; the women come on and make a great noise. When Dromio sees they are likely to be overpowered and bound he rushes up C to the convent; he knocks violently at door (if possible). The abbess appears and they run inside. The abbess and two attendants block the way from others entering.

[1]*The abbess should be garbed in black and gray worn Greek style.*

[2]*Adriana and the woman are on R side; the merchant goes back R; Angelo stays L.*

I'll prove mine honour and mine honesty
Against thee presently, if thou darest stand.

Sec. Mer. (*Crosses to C*). I dare, and do defy thee for a villain. [*They draw.*

Enter ADRIANA, LUCIANA, PHRYNE *and others.*

Adr. Hold, hurt him not, for God's sake! he is mad.

Some get within him, take his sword away:
Bind Dromio too, and bear them to my house.

Dro. S. Run, master, run; for God's sake, take a house!

This is some priory. In, or we are spoil'd!

[*Exeunt* ANT. S. *and* DRO. S. *to the Priory.*

Enter the LADY ABBESS.[1]

Abb. (*C*). Be quiet, people. Wherefore throng you hither?

Adr.[2] (*R C*). To fetch my poor distracted husband hence.

Let us come in, that we may bind him fast,
And bear him home for his recovery.

Ang. (*L*). I knew he was not in his perfect wits.

Sec. Mer. (*R*). I am sorry now that I did draw on him.

[1]*The manner in which the abbess leads Adriana on to betray herself is extremely clever.*

[2]*Their voices rise above one another, Adriana with her shrewish manner, The abbess with a kindly reproof.*

Abb. How long hath this possession held the man?

Adr. This week he hath been heavy, sour, sad,
And much different from the man he was;
But till this afternoon his passion
Ne'er brake into extremity of rage.

Abb. Hath he not lost much wealth by wreck of sea?
Buried some dear friend? Hath not else his eye
Stray'd his affection in unlawful love?

Adr.[1] To none of these, except it be the last;
namely, some love that drew him oft from home.

Abb. You should for that have reprehended him.

Adr. Why, so I did.

Abb. Ay, but not rough enough.

Adr. As roughly as my modesty would let me.

Abb. Haply, in private.

Adr.[2] And in assemblies too.

Abb.[2] Ay, but not enough.

Adr. It was the copy of our conference:
In bed, he slept not for my urging it;

[1]*This is the climax and should be effective.*

[2]*Adriana shows herself in a rather bad light here.*

[3]*The abbess shows her sense and her dignity.*

At board, he fed not for my urging it;
Alone, it was the subject of my theme;
In company I often glanced it;
Still did I tell him it was vile and bad.

Abb.[1] And thereof came it that the man was mad.

The venom clamours of a jealous woman
Poisons more deadly than a mad dog's tooth.
The consequence is, then, thy jealous fits
Have scared thy husband from the use of wits.

Luc. She never reprehended him but mildly,
When he demean'd himself rough, rude, and wildly.
Why bear you these rebukes, and answer not?

Adr.[2] She did betray me to my own reproof.
Good people, enter, and lay hold on him.

Abb.[3] No, not a creature enters in my house.

Adr. Then let your servants bring my husband forth.

Abb. Neither: he took his place for sanctuary,
And it shall privilege him from your hands
Till I have brought him to his wits again,
Or lose my labour in assaying it.

Adr. I will attend my husband, be his nurse,
Diet his sickness, for it is my office,

[1]*The abbess turns and quietly goes into the abbey between her two attendants, the door or curtain closing behind her.*

[2]*Adriana once more sinks exhausted on the seat R C.*

And will have no attorney but myself;
And therefore let me have him home with me.

Abb. Be patient; for I will not let him stir
Till I have used the approved means I have,
With wholesome syrups, drugs and holy prayers,
To make of him a formal man again:
It is a branch and parcel of mine oath,
A charitable duty of my order.
Therefore depart, and leave him here with me.

Adr. I will not hence, and leave my husband here:
And ill it doth beseem your holiness
To separate the husband and the wife.

Abb.[1] Be quiet, and depart: thou shalt not have him. [*Exit.*

Luc. (*R*). Complain unto the Duke of this indignity.

Adr.[2] (*R C*). Come, go: I will fall prostrate at his feet,
And never rise until my tears and prayers
Have won his Grace to come in person hither,
And take perforce my husband from the abbess.

Sec. Mer. (*R*). By this, I think, the dial points at five:
Anon, I'm sure, the Duke himself in person

[1]*The bell or gong begins tolling again off L.*

[2]*The Duke comes first, followed by two soldiers, then Ægeon, and two more soldiers. The Headsman can be one of the soldiers who carries a sword.*

[3]*Adriana and Luciana kneel R C.*

Comes this way to the melancholy vale,
The place of death and sorry execution,
Behind the ditches of the abbey here.

Ang.[1] *L.* Upon what cause?

Sec. Mer. To see a reverend Syracusian merchant,
Who put unluckily into this bay
Against the laws and statutes of this town,
Beheaded publicly for his offence.

Ang. See where they come: we will behold his death.

Luc. Kneel to the Duke before he pass the abbey.

Enter DUKE,[2] *attended; ÆGEON bareheaded; with the* Headsman *and other* Officers.

Duke C. Yet once again proclaim it publicly,
If any friend will pay the sum for him,
He shall not die; so much we tender him.

Adr.[3] Justice, most sacred Duke, against the abbess!

Duke. She is a virtuous and a reverend lady:
It cannot be that she hath done thee wrong.

Adr. May it please your Grace, Antipholus my husband —

[1]*Long not lawng.*

[2]*One of the attendants or soldiers goes to the abbey.*

There can, of course, be more or less attendants than here specified.

Whom I made lord of me and all I had,
At your important letters — this ill day
A most outrageous fit of madness took him;
That desperately he hurried through the street—
With him his bondman, all as mad as he —
Doing displeasure to the citizens
By rushing in their houses, bearing thence
Rings, jewels, any thing his rage did like.
Once did I get him bound, and sent him home,
Then they fled into this abbey, whither we pursued them;
And here the abbess shuts the gates on us,
And will not suffer us to fetch him out,
Nor send him forth, that we may bear him hence.
Therefore, most gracious Duke, with thy command
Let him be brought forth, and borne hence for help.

Duke. (*C*). Long[1] since thy husband served me in my wars;
And I to thee engaged a prince's word,
When thou didst make him master of thy bed,
To do him all the grace and good I could.
Go, some of you, knock at the abbey-gate,
And bid the lady abbess come to me.
I will determine this before I stir.[2]

[2]*There is a great noise off R; then Antipholus rushes on, followed by Dromio, who goes to L; they both kneel.*

Adr.[1] Even now we housed him in the abbey here;
And now he's there, past thought of human reason.

Enter R. ANTIPHOLUS of Ephesus *and* DROMIO of Ephesus.

Ant. E. (*C*). Justice, most gracious Duke,
O, grant me justice!
Even for the service that long since I did thee,
When I bestrid thee in the wars, and took
Deep scars to save thy life; even for the blood
That then I lost for thee, now grant me justice.
Æge. Unless the fear of death doth make me dote,
I see my son Antipholus, and Dromio.
Ant. E. Justice, sweet prince, against that woman there!
She whom thou gavest to me to be my wife,
That hath abused and dishonour'd me
Even in the strength and height of injury:
Beyond imagination is the wrong
That she this day hath shameless thrown on me.
Duke. Discover how, and thou shalt find me just.

[1]*Antipholus rises and speaks from C; Duke is R C on seat; the women gathered around down and up R; Antipholus points to each person as he mentions them; they acknowledge or deny by shake or nod of head. Dromio sits on the ground L of his master.*

Ant. E. This day, great Duke, she shut the doors upon me,
While she with strangers feasted in my house.
Duke. A grievous fault! Say, woman, did'st thou so?
Adr. No, my good lord: myself, he and my sister
To-day did dine together. So befal my soul
As this is false he burthens me withal!
Ant. E.[1] My liege, I am advised what I say;
Neither disturbed with the effect of wine,
Nor heady-rash, provoked with raging ire,
Albeit my wrongs might make one wiser mad.
This woman lock'd me out this day from dinner:
That goldsmith there, were he not pack'd with her,
Could witness it, for he was with me then;
Who parted with me to go fetch a chain,
Promising to bring it to the Porpentine,
Where Balthazar and I did dine together.
Our dinner done, and he not coming thither,
I went to seek him: in the street I met him,
And in his company that gentleman.
There did this perjured goldsmith swear me down

[1]*Dromio expresses by a decided shake of the head that he has not had the money.*

[2]*He kneels again.*

That I this day of him received the chain,
Which, God he knows, I saw not: for the which
He did arrest me with an officer.
I did obey; and sent my peasant home
For certain ducats:[1] he with none return'd.
Then fairly I bespoke the officer
To go in person with me to my house.
By the way we met my wife, her sister, and a
rabble more
Of vile confederates. Along with them
They brought one Pinch, this pernicious slave,
Forsooth, took on him as a conjurer;
And, gazing in mine eyes, feeling my pulse,
And with no face, as 'twere, outfacing me,
Cries out, I was possess'd. Then all together
They fell upon me, bound me, bore me thence,
And in a dark and dankish vault at home
There left me and my man, both bound together;
Till, gnawing with my teeth my bonds in sunder,
I gain'd my freedom, and immediately
Ran hither to your Grace, whom I beseech[2]
To give me ample satisfaction
For these deep shames and great indignities.

Ang. (*L*). My lord, in truth, thus far I wit-
ness with him,

That he dined not at home, but was lock'd out.

Duke. But had he such a chain of thee or no?

Ang. (*L*). He had, my lord: and when he ran in here,

These people saw the chain about his neck.

Sec. Mer. (*R*). Besides, I will be sworn these ears of mine

Heard you confess you had the chain of him,

After you first forswore it on the mart:

And thereupon I drew my sword on you;

And then you fled into this abbey here,

From whence, I think, you are come by miracle.

Ant. E. I never came within these abbey-walls;

Nor ever didst thou draw thy sword on me:

I never saw the chain, so help me Heaven!

And this is false you burthen me withal.

Duke. Why, what an intricate impeach is this!

I think you all have drunk of Circe's cup.

If here you housed him, here he would have been;

If he were mad, he would not plead so coldly:

You say he dined at home; the goldsmith here

Denies that saying. Sirrah, what say you?

[1]*He points across to Phryne, who is at the extreme K, she acknowledges it.*

[2]*Curtseying.*

[3]*Duke rises; Antipholus goes to L C.*

[4]*Poor old Ægeon has stood by longing to speak.*

[5]*The officers bring him down to C. Dromio kneels by his master L; both of them are amazed at the old man's words.*

Dro. E. Sir, he dined with her there, at the Porpentine.[1]

Phry. (*R*). He did; and from my finger snatch'd that ring.

Ant. E. (*C*). 'Tis true, my liege; this ring I had of her.

Duke. Saw'st thou him enter at the abbey here?

Phry.[2] As sure, my liege, as I do see your Grace.

Duke.[3] Why, this is strange. Go call the abbess hither.
I think you are all mated, or stark mad.

(*Crosses to R C.*)

[*Exit one to the abbess.*

Æge.[4] Most mighty Duke, vouchsafe me speak a word:
Haply I see a friend will save my life,
And pay the sum that may deliver me.

Duke. Speak freely, Syracusian, what thou wilt.

Æge.[5] Is not your name, sir, call'd Antipholus?
And is not that your bondman, Dromio?

Dro. E. Within this hour I was his bondman, sir,

Note.— The lines of Dromio are better omitted, as an audience always laughs at any simply expressed sentiment by a comical character. It is the same with eating on the stage. It is hardly ever received seriously, because we — all of us — do it so often in ordinary life.

In this particular situation all is so heart-stirring that it would be wrong to raise any laughter. The old man's plight and the tardy realization of his life's dream — to find, and be reunited to his wife and sons — make one of the most poignant situations in drama. Note once more the masterly stage construction of this last scene.

But he, I thank him, gnaw'd in two my cords:
Now am I Dromio, and his man unbound.

Æge. I am sure you both of you remember me.

Æge. (*C*). Why look you strange on me? you know me well.

Ant. E. I never saw you in my life till now.

Æge. (*C*). O, grief hath changed me since you saw me last,
And careful hours with time's deformed hand
Have written strange defeatures in my face:
But tell me yet, dost thou not know my voice?

Ant. E. Neither.

Æge. Dromio, nor thou?

Dro. E. No, trust me, sir, nor I.

Æge. I am sure thou dost.

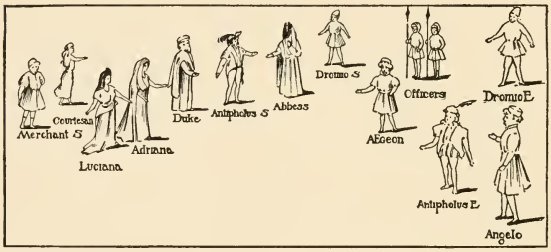
Not know my voice! O time's extremity,
Hast thou so crack'd and splitted my poor tongue
In seven short years, that here my only son
Knows not my feeble key of untuned cares?
Tell me thou art my son Antipholus.

Ant. E. I never saw my father in my life.

Æge. But seven years since, in Syracusa, boy,

[1]*Antipholus and Dromio here go to the extreme L of the stage so that when the other brothers come on they will all be at a fair distance from each other; Ægeon is lead a little to the L.*

[2]*The Abbess comes out of her house, leading Antipholus Syracuse on her R. The picture is held for a moment.*



[3]*The brothers stare in amazement at each other, so do the parents; Syracuse embraces his father; Dromio commences to cheer him and undo his cords; the abbess and Ægeon stand still until the time for loosening the bonds; then she helps.*

Thou know'st we parted: but perhaps, my son,
Thou shamest to acknowledge me in misery.

Ant. E.[1] The Duke and all that know me in the city
Can witness with me that it is not so:
I ne'er saw Syracusa in my life.

Duke. I tell thee, Syracusian, twenty years
Have I been patron to Antipholus,
During which time he ne'er saw Syracusa:
I see thy age and dangers make thee dote.

Re-enter ABBESS,[2] *with* ANTIPHOLUS of Syracuse *and* DROMIO of Syracuse.

Abb. Most mighty Duke, behold a man much wrong'd. [*All gather to see them.*

Adr. I see two husbands, or mine eyes deceive me.

Duke. One of these men is Genius to the other[3];
And so of these. Which is the natural man,
And which the spirit? who deciphers them?

Dro. S. I, sir, am Dromio: command him away.

Dro. E. I, sir, am Dromio; pray, let me stay.

Ant. S. Ægeon art thou not? or else his ghost?

Note.— The poignancy of this scene must be preserved till the end as far as the Ægeon family is concerned.

[1]*At the mention of their names they all embrace, but seriously.*

Dro. S. O, my old master! who hath bound him here?

Abb. Whoever bound him, I will loose his bonds,
And gain a husband by his liberty.
Speak, old Ægeon, if thou be'st the man
That hadst a wife once call'd Æmilia,
That bore thee at a burthen two fair sons:
O, if thou be'st the same Ægeon, speak,
And speak unto the same Æmilia!

Æge. If I dream not, thou art Æmilia:
If thou art she, tell me, where is that son
That floated with thee on the fatal raft?

Abb. By men of Epidamnum he and I
And the twin Dromio, all were taken up;
But by and by rude fishermen of Corinth
By force took Dromio and my son from them,
And me they left with those of Epidamnum.
What then became of them I cannot tell;
I to this fortune that you see me in.

Duke.[1] Why, here begins his morning story right:
These two Antipholuses, these two so like,
And these two Dromios, one in semblance —
Besides her urging of her wreck at sea —

[1]*The Duke speaks to Ephesus and when he finds his mistake he uses a wide flourish of the hands to keep them apart.*

[2]*Æmilia and Ægeon go up C conversing.*

[3]*The two brothers are talking together L C when Adriana rather cautiously comes across.*

[4]*She throws her arms around the wrong man; Ephesus playfully puts Syracuse over and comes between.*

[5]*Syracuse crosses over to R to Luciana.*

[6]*After deliberation Angelo crosses to C; after the reply he shakes head, laughs, and goes back to L.*

These are the parents to these children,
Which accidentally are met together.
Antipholus, thou camest from Corinth first?

Ant. S. No, sir, not I; I came from Syracuse.

Duke.[1] Stay, stand apart; I know not which is which.

Ant. E. I came from Corinth, my most gracious lord —

Dro. E. And I with him.

Ant. E. Brought to this town by that most famous warrior, Duke Menaphon, your most renowned uncle.[2]

Adr.[3] Which of you two did dine with me to-day?

Ant. S. I, gentle mistress.

Adr.[4] And are not you my husband?

Ant. E. No, I say nay to that.

Ant. S. And so do I; yet she did call me so:
And this fair gentlewoman, her sister here,[5]
Did call me brother. [*Crosses to Luciana.*] What I told you then,
I hope I shall have leisure to make good;
If this be not a dream I see and hear.

Ang.[6] That is the chain, sir, which you had of me.

[1]*Be careful to keep the positions, as the end of the play is difficult, owing to several movements.*

[2]*Dromio violently shakes his head; he has been accused of all sorts of things during the play.*

[3]*He throws the bag of money to Ephesus.*

[4]*Who holds them up to free his father.*

[5]*He now throws the bag to the Dromios, who dance with delight.*

[6]*Adriana is talking to the Dromios, when Phryne comes over from R to talk to Antipholus; he takes off the ring and gives it to her; Adriana turns at this moment and runs after her; they fight it out up stage L; Phryne escapes; Adriana and Antipholus are reconciled.*

Ant. S. I think it be, sir; I deny it not.

Ant. E.[1] And you, sir, for this chain arrested me.

Ang. I think I did, sir; I deny it not.

Adr. I sent you money, sir, to be your bail,
By Dromio; but I think he brought it not.

Dro. E.[2] No, none by me.

Ant. S. This purse of ducats I received from you,
And Dromio my man did bring them me.
I see we still did meet each other's man;
And I was ta'en for him, and he for me;
And thereupon these *errors* are arose.[3]

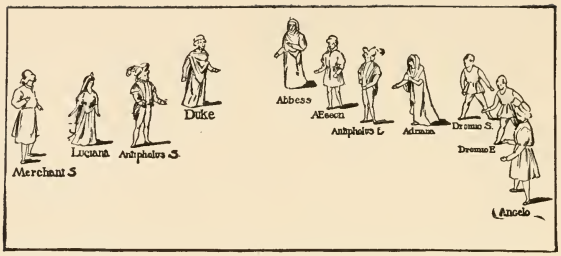
Ant. E.[4] These ducats pawn I for my father here.

Duke. It shall not need; thy father hath his life.[5]

Phry.[6] Sir, I must have that diamond from you.

Ant. E. There, take it; and much thanks for my good cheer.

Abb. (*C*). Renowned Duke, vouchsafe to take the pains
To go with us into the abbey here,
And hear at large discoursed all our fortunes:



The "Disposition" of the Characters Must Be Very Carefully Arranged. Hence This Diagram

[1]*Æmilia curtseys to Duke, then gives her left hand to Ægeon; the two sons go forward and kneel; the two Dromios plump down on their knees, resuming their previous positions as Duke moves up C.*

[2]*The Duke takes Æmilia's right hand and Ægeon her left and they go off up C into house.*

[3]*The two Dromios talk together; the two Antipholuses also; when Dromio speaks at the words "embrace thy brother," they do so. At the same time Syracuse has hold of Adriana and Ephesus of Luciana. They discover their mistakes, all embrace again and go off into abbey, laughing and very happy.*

[4]*The Dromios go up after them. Stand with backs to audience, shake with laughter, then talk together.*

And all that are assembled in this place,
That by this sympathized one day's error
Have suffer'd wrong, go keep us company,
And we shall make full satisfaction.
The Duke, my husband, and my children both,[1]
And you the calendars of their nativity,
Go to a gossips' feast, and go with me;
After so long grief, such nativity!

Duke.[2] With all my heart, I'll gossip at this feast.

[*Exeunt all but* ANT. S., ANT. E., DRO. S., *and* DRO. E.

Dro. S. Master, shall I fetch your stuff from ship-board?

Ant. E. Dromio, what stuff of mine hast thou embark'd?

Dro. S.[3] Your goods that lay at host, sir, in the Centaur.

Ant. S. He speaks to me. I am your master, Dromio:
Come, go with us; we'll look to that anon:
Embrace thy brother there; rejoice with him.

[*Exeunt* ANT. S. *and* ANT. E.

Dro. S.[4] (*R*). There is a fat friend at your master's house

[1]*They may have a little dance together and then dance off, very much pleased with one another, into abbey.*

That kitchen'd me for you to-day at dinner:
She now shall be my sister, not my wife.

Dro. E. (*L*). Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother:
I see by you I am a sweet-faced youth.
Will you walk in to see their gossiping?

Dro. S. Not I, sir; you are my elder.

Dro. E. That's a question: how shall we try it?

Dro. S. We'll draw cuts for the senior: till then lead thou first.

Dro. E. Nay, then, thus:
We came into the world like brother and brother;
And now let's go hand in hand, not one before another. [*Exeunt.*[1]

THE END

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